



Elizabeth Gilg <elizabeth@laurelcares.com>

FW: ATTENTION Governor Gianforte, BOI Director Villa and DPHHS Director Brereton

Ward 4A <ward4a@laurel.mt.gov>
To: Elizabeth Gilg <elizabeth@laurelcares.com>

Wed, Mar 4, 2026 at 6:12 AM

Ms. Gilg,

Here is a copy of the Council's statement. I forwarded it this way so you can see who all we sent and cc'd it, too.

Sincerely,
CM Mackay

From: Ward 4A
Sent: Tuesday, March 3, 2026 7:02 PM
To: governor@mt.gov; dvilla@mt.gov; BOI.ED@mt.gov; Charles.Brereton@mt.gov
Cc: contactdoj@mt.gov; John Esp <johnespforSenate@gmail.com>; john.esp@legmt.gov; vince.ricci@legmt.gov; Deming, Lee <lee.deming@legmt.gov>; Ward 1A <ward1a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2B <ward2b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 1B <ward1b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3B <ward3b@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 2A <ward2a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 3A <ward3a@laurel.mt.gov>; Ward 4B <ward4b@laurel.mt.gov>; City Mayor <citymayor@laurel.mt.gov>; Kurt Markegard <kmarkegard@laurel.mt.gov>; Civil Attorney <civilattorney@laurel.mt.gov>; Michele Braukmann <michele@meridianlawmt.com>; Brittney Harakal <bharakal@laurel.mt.gov>; cwhite@yellowstonecountymt.gov; mwaters@yellowstonecountymt.gov; mmorse@yellowstonecountymt.gov
Subject: ATTENTION Governor Gianforte, BOI Director Villa and DPHHS Director Brereton

March 3, 2026

Governor Greg Gianforte, BOI Director Dan Villa and DPHHS Director Charles Brereton:

Greetings from Laurel's City Council. We are 8 elected officials in a small, hardworking, thoughtful community. We wish to speak directly to YOU, public servant to public servant.

The last few months have been chaos in our town due to your efforts to place a Forensic Mental Health Facility in the midst of our community. Despite an opening statement on the State's House Bill 5 informational website (www.hb5.mt.gov), claiming, "Stakeholder input and local engagement are priorities. DPHHS and BOI will work collaboratively with communities to ensure informed planning and responsible site selection," and the Governor's prompting to the BOI and DPHHS to be public about the process and reassurance that the facility would not be built where it wasn't wanted, the State has been pushing ahead with the intent of building the facility just west of Laurel and disregarding public input and outcry. To date, the Laurel City Council nor Laurel citizens have had no meaningful engagement with any state officials regarding this topic. While we recognize the role our Executive Branch may have played in early talks, we want to remind you of your commitment to our constituents. Thus far, your promises appear to be misleading if not complete falsehoods.

It should be noted that your efforts have galvanized a grass roots effort comprised of concerned and educated citizens. They are digging into this issue and carefully evaluating your methods. They have raised countless legitimate concerns and have sought avenues for public comment and engagement. It would be wise to engage with these voters and make them part of your process.

This letter in no way presupposes any Laurel City Council member's vote if we are tasked with decisions about Laurel's Growth Policy, annexation or zoning. This council is committed to weighing the options set before us and listening to our constituents who are, in fact, our friends and neighbors.

Sincerely,

Council President Tom Canape (Ward 1)
Council Vice President Richard Klose (Ward 4)
Council Member Brent Edgmond (Ward 2)
Council Member Casey Wheeler (Ward 3)
Council Member Sara Naylor (Ward 1)
Council Member Jessica Banks (Ward 2)
Council Member Irv Wilke (Ward 3)
Council Member Jodi Mackay (Ward 4)